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ABSTRACT

Three alternative views of adult development can serve to distinguish competing schools of thought regarding the research, theory, and practice of human resource development (HRD). These views are as follows: (1) the person-centered view, which aims at self-realization of the individual and is grounded in humanistic psychology and liberalism; (2) the production-centered view, which focuses on organizational goals and is based on behaviorism and libertarianism; and (3) the view that defines development as principled problem solving and is grounded in cognitive psychology, progressivism, and pragmatism. Approaches to HRD based on each view have their own strengths and potential shortcomings. From a practical standpoint, understanding the premises and potential benefits and shortcomings of each approach can enable HRD professionals to make more informed choices. For example, an HRD professional faced with lagging work performance in an organization might approach the issue in the following three different ways, depending on the perspective adopted: (1) proposing to post top performers' names and hold monthly award ceremonies (person-centered approach); (2) proposing switching to a piece rate or pay-for-performance system (performance-centered approach); and (3) proposing an open-book management strategy where employers receive full information about the implications of poor performance (principled problem-solving approach). (Contains 42 references.) (MN)

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PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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1

The research, theory, and practice of the field of Human Resource Development are based on often unspoken assumptions about the concept of adult development. Examining these assumptions is useful for researchers and practitioners because of the possibility of more deliberate choices and improved scholarship and professional practice. Three alternative views of adult development can serve to distinguish competing schools of thought, each rooted in different philosophical traditions and political thought. The person-centered view aims at self-realization of the individual and is grounded in humanistic psychology and liberalism; the production-centered view focuses on organizational goals and is based on behaviorism and libertarianism; and the definition of development as principled problem-solving is grounded in cognitive psychology, progressivism, and pragmatism. Each view serves as a root construct for a specific orientation toward the role and function of the profession. By highlighting the differences between these views and their relative strengths and shortcomings, the author seeks to advance the theoretical foundation of the field and to contribute to more reasoned theory and practice.

Paradigmatic debates are still rare in the field of Human Resource Development (HRD) that is relatively young and concerned with gaining and expanding its academic legitimacy relative to the established fields of adult education, vocational education, and the array of management and organizational sciences. The practice of HRD is firmly established, with US organizations expending over $200 billion per year on HRD interventions (Training, 1997) and an exceedingly vibrant training and consulting industry operating in this country and abroad. Still, there are continued calls for more and better research and recommendations for practice to keep up with the pace of technical, political, economic, and social changes that organizations face in this global economy.

As an academic matter, HRD programs are now firmly established in US graduate schools. HRD enrollments are among the fastest growing in schools of Education where the "training of ...HRD professionals is now the 'bread and butter' activity" (Gray, 1997, p. 80). Here, paradigm debates can deepen theory and provide the foundation for new research.

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What philosophical debates exist in HRD have centered on whether professional HRD activities should promote 'performance' or 'learning'. Swanson and Watkins argued this issue during the profession's annual conference in 1995 (Holton, 1995). Dirkx (1997) juxtaposed earning and learning in discussing the meaning of work, and Barrie and Pace (1998) argued for the adoption of a liberal education framework for the HRD profession. The learning focus is most prominently advanced by those adult education scholars, who claim HRD as an area of practice (for example, Dirkx, 1997). More recently, Kuchinke (1998) has attempted to reconcile these perspectives by using a progressive learning philosophy.. Lewis (1996) described a model that differentiated proactive from reactive training along several context, process, and outcome factor dimensions. Watkins (1989) described five alternative metaphors for the HRD professional: organizational problem solver, change agent, designer, empowerer, and developer of human capital.

No attempt, however, has been made to analyze the field in terms of its understanding of 'development', a concept so centrally positioned in the name of the profession. What HRD professionals view—implicitly or explicitly—as the purpose and end of developmental activities for persons in organizations gives rise to very different models of HRD. Since HRD is an applied field and therefore concerned with practical problems—deciding what to do and what action to take (Copa, 1985)—HRD professionals address not only what is, but predominantly what should be. Reasoned practice, however, depends on reflective choices of the ends or purposes of action, and it is at this normative level that the distinction between different views of HRD becomes most salient and revealing. Should HRD practice aim at the well being of the individual worker, as Bjorquist and Lewis (1992) argued, or should the interests of the shareholders predominate, as Friedman (1970) advocated? Should HRD aim primarily at responding to business needs and corporate goals, as Rummler and Brache (1990) proposed, or is a stakeholder model of the organization more appropriate, whereby HRD functions as the advocate of valid and legitimate interests of an inclusive set of groups that shape corporate strategy (Evan and Freeman, 1988)?

The purpose of this paper is to answer the following questions: How can different definitions of human development in organizations be used to distinguish alternative HRD philosophies? How do these frameworks differ in terms of their philosophical and political assumptions and contributing schools of thought? How have these frameworks informed HRD theory, and how has HRD practice been conceived from each perspective? And, finally, what new directions are emerging from theory and practice that might overcome the shortcomings of existing philosophies and more adequately answer to the challenges of the rapidly changing world of work?

Frameworks of Human Development

HRD theory and practice appear to be driven by three different theoretical approaches related to the purpose of developing persons in organizations. These

frameworks can be classified following the classic work of Lawrence Kohlberg and Rochelle Mayer (1972) who distinguished among three streams of educational ideologies, romantic, cultural transmission, and progressive. A similar triarchy was described by Malcolm Knowles (1984) who described three models of adult education: mechanistic/behaviorist, cognitive, and organismic/humanistic, each associated with a unique strategies for learning and based on "three different models of man" (p. 6.6).

The system developed in this article classifies schools of thought according to the central focus of the developmental activity: person-centered, production-centered, and principled problem solving. Each is rooted in different philosophical traditions and makes specific assumptions about the nature of human beings and the nature of organizations and society.

Table 1 presents the frameworks of human development in greater detail. Each is described in terms of its roots in philosophy and the social sciences, the proposed aims or end goals, the assumptions about human nature, and about the nature of organizations and the larger economic and societal context.

Person-Centered Development

The concept of person-centered development in HRD is rooted in the philosophical traditions of idealism, humanism, and romanticism. Romanticism was an intellectual movement that was at its height toward the end of the 18th and early 19th century (Flew, 1979). In more recent times, the romantic notion of development was expressed by A. S. Neill, whose Summerhill represented an example of a school based on these principles, and proponents of the California growth movement, who emphasized inner growth and the connection to one's inner reality. Personality theorists of humanistic psychology—the "third force" in psychology— included scholars such as Henry Murray, Gordon Allport, Abraham Maslow, and Carl Rogers. Strongly influenced by Existentialism, they carried the romantic tradition into contemporary times. Many concepts and theories in organizational development, a field within HRD, have their origins in this philosophy.

The person-centered notion of development is the discovery and unfolding of innate qualities, of the inner good and inborn health of the human being, and the search for personal fulfillment and meaning. Successful development means being all one can be. Individuals are seen as proactive, rational, self-aware, and complex; they possess freedom and dignity; and carry the responsibility to find meaning for their lives. There is the assumption of a tendency toward positive values and a strong emphasis on inner states and feelings. Performance, skills, achievements, tasks, and responsibilities and duties are not satisfying in themselves, but important as means to inner growth, awareness, happiness, and health.

Table 1
Classification of Theories of Human Development

	Person-Centered	Production-Centered	Principled Problem-Solving
Philosophical Roots	• Humanistic Psychology: (Maslow, Rogers) • Romantic Idealism: Rousseau • Existentialism	• Behaviorism: Skinner • Libertarian Philosophy: Smith, Friedman,	• Cognitive-developmental Psychology: Kohlberg • Pragmatism: Dewey, James • Radical Humanism: Aktouf • Postmodernism: Kincheloe
Aims of Human Development	• Self-development, • Allow "inner good" to unfold; Remove barriers to maturation	• Competently and efficiently fulfillling organizational roles; • Increasing performance as defined by organization	• Integration and synthesis of internal and external demands; • Dynamic balance of competing claims; • Self-development through performance
Assumptions about human nature	• Inborn wisdom and goodness; • Health equals happiness	• Needs/wants determined by society/culture; • Health equals adjustment	• Ability to integrate external and internal demands; • Experience is paramount; • Health equals adequate cognitive understanding
Assumptions about nature of organizations	Optimal organizational. functioning achieved through happy people	• Goal oriented, • Goals determined by owners, • Human capital employed to achieve goals	• Stakeholder model; • Temporary and dynamically changing configuration of needs/wants of various stakeholders
Examples	• Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs • Herzberg's 2-factor theory • Spirituality, • Meaning of Work, • Quality of Worklife	• Industrial Training • Rummler and Brache • Mager and Pipe, • Performance Technology	• Lawler: high involvement organizations; • Masick/Watkins: Learning Organization

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Person-centered development and the organization. In the organizational realm, the person-centered notion of development translates into the desire for a caring, nurturing environment where employees can blossom and draw on their innate capabilities and skills. Organizations function optimally when the barriers to self-development are removed, and 67when an open and trusting environment is created in which individual creativity can be revealed. This orientation relies heavily on the notion of reality as socially and individually constructed (Berger & Luckman, 1966) and is largely silent about prescription for the structure of society or business.

Examples in the organizational realm abound: Maslow's hierarchy of needs is based on a latent developmental sequence that comes from within (Maslow, 1970); the goal of development and the key to meaningful work are the actualization of the self. Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation is based on a congruency model of matching inner needs with external tasks (Herzberg, 1966). W. Edwards Deming and other proponents of Total Quality Management based their philosophy on the willing worker, the motivated employee who wants to do a good job but is stymied by a system of management or work design that makes good work impossible (Deming, 1982). Russ-Eft's (1996) survey found that close to half (47%) of the HRD consultants interviewed held views similar to the person-centered view of HRD, advocating training be "primarily provided for the individual's benefit" (p. 404).

Strengths of the person-centered approach. The strengths of this philosophy of HRD lie in the compelling ideas of the perfectibility of the human being, the importance of individuals and their responsibility to the self, and the role of the untapped potentialities inside every one.
It places the locus of control over and responsibility for the individual's life and actions squarely at his or her feet. Following the Kantian imperative, persons should always be treated as ends in themselves, never as means to an end. It proposes that employees are stakeholders in their organizations whose rights are on par with the shareholders and owners. The perspective paves the conceptual way for employee participation and employee wellness approaches. Nadler's (1984) definition touches upon this understanding of adult development when he provided the following definitions: "learning [is] for growth of the individual, but not related to a specific present or future job....Development is designed to help individuals grow, through learning in general, not necessarily in a specific direction" (pp. 1.22-1.23).

Critique. The person-centered view of HRD, however, is also vulnerable as a reasoned basis for HRD because it is largely silent about the economic dimension of work in organizations. While self-development might well be seen as a primary individual goal and perhaps a public good that deserves support in form of educational opportunities for everybody, it is not the primary charter of organizations operating in a competitive environment. Organizations incur direct, indirect, and opportunity costs when conducting HRD activities. These costs will put them at an economic disadvantage unless the pay-off of HRD interventions exceeds their costs and provides a return on investment. Because employees are free to leave an organization at any time, organizations incur a risk when enhancing an employee's level of skill. For this reason, firms invest more in organization-specific training than in general training and education (Tharenou, 1997). For very similar reasons, countries with greater rates of employee retention tend to provide more—and more general—training than countries where employment relationships are more short-lived. Unless there is a clear economic rationale, person-centered development activities will not find the support in most organizations. Organizations exist—and

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managers are legally bound to manage them—in the interests of their owners (and 43 percent of the U.S. workforce now own stock as a result the growth of retirement and pension funds invested in mutual funds). Inner growth must be the primary responsibility of the individual, it is not the charter of the organization, and managers are neither charged to provide personal development nor are they, in most cases, capable of doing so competently.

Production-Centered Development

While the person-centered view of development emphasizes individual needs and goals, the concept of production-centered development stresses the enhancement of the productive capacity of a person as the goal of development. The role of HRD is to transmit knowledge, skills, and the social and behavioral rules of the organization. Successful development means the acquisition of prerequisite skills, knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values in order to be able to respond favorably to external demands. This framework depends heavily on role theory (Stryker and Statham, 1985); development is evaluated in terms of the degree of fit between measurable and observable behaviors and role expectations, and not, as in the case of the person-centered view, in terms of feelings, thoughts, or other internal states. In the 1940s this position was expressed well by Dooley in The Training Within Industry Report (cited in Swanson and Torraco, 1995, p. 2): "Training is for the good of plant production—it is a way to solve production problems through people; it is specific and helps people to acquire skills through the use of what they learned."

Production-focused development and the organization. In this view, organizations are primarily goal-oriented entities, structured and organized around the achievement of goals set by management on behalf of the owners or shareholders, and they acquire and develop human and other resources to achieve those goals. The role of the individual is to contribute to the goals set by the organization, and the task of HRD is to equip employees with the requisite attributes to do so. The view of employees is functional: humans are seen as resources, employed to fulfill specific functions and defined, within the organizational context, by those functions. Development is the degree to which individuals are becoming equipped to fulfill their roles and contribute to the attainment of organizational goals. An example is given by Rummler and Brache (1990) who posited that individual level performance management was defined by the following: individuals understand the job goals; have sufficient resources, priorities, and logical job design; are rewarded for achieving job goals; receive feedback; and have the necessary knowledge and skills. This view of HRD is supported by 14% of the HRD consultants surveyed by Russ-Eft (1996).

Strengths of the production-centered approach. The strength of this framework lies in its ability to find quick responses to well-defined problems. Within an immediate time horizon, HRD can help provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required meeting clear objectives. In situations where clear goals exist, where these goals are agreed upon and supported, where the ways to meet these goals are proven and known, and the required resources are available, production-focused HRD can provide the necessary support to meet these important objectives. This view is predominant in the management sciences, including organizational behavior, organizational theory, industrial/organizational psychology, and industrial relations. It posits the rational aspect of an organization, makes planning and strategy possible, and enables forecasting, and goal setting.

Rooted in a libertarian philosophy (Maitland, 1994), the relationship between employee and the organization is characterized by rational and free choice and a clear contractual understanding of the rights (for example, pay, benefits.) and duties (for instance, task, working hours) by each party.

Critique of the production-centered approach. The primary criticism against this view centers on the nature of modern organizations. The production-centered view portrays organizations as static, closed, mechanistic systems rather than open systems in dynamic, continuous interchange with the external environment. In many organizations, requirements change frequently, and employees and managers alike satisfice rather than maximize the demands of multiple constituents. As Weick (1990) asserted, there is a growing consensus that management is "more like cartography than like the board game 'Mastermind' in which people try to discover a pre-set pattern" (p. 317). Without a pre-set pattern of correct answers, work becomes a response to a continuously shifting set of preferences that requires active and intelligent interpretation by all participants. Where organizational goals are ambiguous and means to achieving those goals uncertain, narrowly defined job skills are of limited effectiveness. Swanson and Torraco (1995) spoke about this complexity when introducing a taxonomy of performance with two tiers—managing the system and changing the system. As they and other observers of the changing nature of work (for example, Reich, 1991) noted, the specific definable and trainable tasks that formed the vast majority of work in the early part of this century are giving way to more amorphous, ambiguous task requirements. This calls for a broader range of skills, attitudes, behaviors, and abilities for which the production-centered model with its mechanistic notion of skill transfer may no longer be adequate.

Principled problem-solving as the goal of development When the person-centered view of development was the unfolding of innate, latent patterns and potentialities, and the production-centered model stressed the adjustment of the individual to the demands of the external environment, the principled problem-solving view seeks to overcome the shortcomings of both. It is the most complex stance and perhaps the most difficult to implement. Based on the progressive educational ideology (a term first introduced by John Dewey) it defines development as "an active change in patterns of thinking brought about by experiential problem-solving situations" (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972, p. 455). This framework mirrors and expands the central concepts of the progressive education movement.

Progressivism stresses the interactive, dynamic aspect of problem solving in a given social situation. It focuses on the primacy of experience and experiential learning, on the active involvement of individuals in emergent problematic social situations. The emphasis is neither on the internalization of established goals or values, nor the unfolding of spontaneous impulses and emotions, but the "active change in patterns of response to problematic social situations" (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972, p. 455). The aim is the achievement of a solution that satisfies all participants given the specific situational constraints.

The aims of development under this approach are to foster the ability for optimal functioning through critical thinking and problem-solving, for an integration and synthesis of internal and external demands, and of balancing competing claims with the goal of functional (in the broad, pragmatic sense) optimization of the situation. This includes an examination of the underlying

assumptions of a given situation, an awareness of the historical conditions that have led to the current situation, the ability to take others' roles and perceive accurately the perspectives of all parties involved, and the personal maturity and integrity to find creative solutions in situations where scarce resources demand tough decisions. Rather than advocating the exclusive development of the self, or blindly adhering to an external goal, this approach suggests the continuous re-definition of a given situation in light of its requirements, the courage to challenge past solutions and examine current assumptions, and the consideration of dynamically changing configurations of the needs and wants of all stakeholders.

Principled problem-solving and HRD Support for the dynamic problem-solving notion of development can be found in the early writings of Chris Argyris, who in 1964 envisioned that "the organization of the future will ...include expanded use of the individual's intellectual and interpersonal abilities" (Argyris, 1964, p. 274). Human Resource Management scholars such as Walton, who distinguished between the control model and the commitment model, further address it. The latter is characterized by broader job design policies, high performance expectations, revised compensation policies, employment assurance, employment voice policies, and a changed management philosophy where "the fulfillment of many employee needs is taken as a goal rather than merely as a means to other ends" (Walton, 1985, p. 49). In more recent writing, Lawler (1992) described the involvement-oriented approach to management which is "highly congruent with democratic values about decision making and respect for individual rights" and which has "a definitive competitive advantage (perhaps the single most important advantage) over the control-oriented approach" (Lawler, 1992, p. 43). The high involvement organization is based on strong commitment to continuous development and improvement across a wide spectrum of skills and abilities, technical as well as cognitive and interpersonal. High performance organizations have implemented employee involvement practices, such as sharing information, developing knowledge, rewarding performance, redistributing power, and maintaining an open flow of communication throughout the organization. These organizations draw on the expertise of a broad range of employees and use diversity strategically. They embrace the changes in the social, technical, economic, and political spheres of life (Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford, 1995. The notion of the Learning Organization, founded on open and free communication, exchange of ideas, and an attitudes towards inquiry and insight (Marsick & Watkins, 1994) is a further extension of this approach.

These principles appear in organizations like 3M which has instituted the widely known "15 percent rule", allowing engineers to spend up to 6 hours per week on work not directly related to current production. In return, each department is expected to generate enough new product ideas so those products that are developed in the past three years generate 40% of annual sales volume.

Another example is Zytec, recent winner of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, that instituted semi-autonomous work teams where employees have wide decision-making power related to the work processes. In return, gain-sharing and pay-for-performance plans allow employees to share the financial benefits of the enterprise.

Strengths of the principled problem solving approach. The major strength of this orientation to HRD is its inclusiveness and systematic nature. In a fast-changing world, the resources, concerns, and needs of all must be considered, and an inclusive approach is superior to win-lose or lose-lose propositions. Secondly, this approach is capable to address issues of global scope,

social justice and democratic values, and attempts to find solutions to the complex problems of a democratic market economy. It provides for full participation of all employees and has the potential of creating situations where everybody wins. It rejects that the world is a zero-sum game and proposes creative solutions to difficult problems. It represents a value orientation that balances economic goals with social goals, and has the potential to realize the vision of organization development community of a democratic and egalitarian work place (Gellerman, Frankel, and Ladenson, 1990). It offers the vision of the worker as researcher (Kincheloe, 1995), and the development of expertise through contextual learning and experimentation (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1993). It lastly offers the opportunity for work that is satisfying, interesting, stimulating, and productive.

Critique A major shortcomings of this approach to human development are its requirement for long-term commitment and development in a competitive market place that oftentimes rewards short-term success. Maitland (1994) addressed this problem and argued that political changes must precipitate changes in organizational policies, in order to avoid punishment of organizations that forego short-term profits for the sake of long-term development. As long as organizations are evaluated on quarterly fiscal results alone, long-term strategies that sacrifice short-run results for long-term gain may not become widespread. However, as Aktouf, writing from a radical humanistic perspective, observes: "this movement toward a more human firm is neither a romantic ideal nor a philanthropic gesture, nor a utopia, but a necessity .... [Organizations] need to step out of the Taylorian rut....[T]he time has come for the employee who knows how (and is allowed) to think, to react, to modify" (pp. 417-418).

Secondly, many companies, especially start-up and small firms, are unable to invest in the long-term development of their employees, and there are some job categories that do not require extensive use of higher-level cognitive skills and problem-solving abilities. Lastly, not all employees may be willing to become involved and take on greater shares of responsibility and participation, so that the developmental approach may only be applied selectively.

Conclusion

In this paper, the author proposed that the principal foundations and assumptions of the various theories, concepts, and practices of Human Resource Development might be understood as three distinct approaches: person-centered, production–centered, and principled problem solving. These approaches are based on different philosophies of adult development. This attempt at a classification and explication of the roots and strengths and potential shortcomings of each approach can be useful for furthering theory and practice of the emerging HRD field.

As a practical matter, understanding the premises of each approach can lead HRD professionals to more informed choices. Reasoned practice, after all, is based upon a reasoned philosophy of action. A HRD professional who is, for example, faced with lagging work performance in an organization might approach this issue from any one of the three proposed approaches: From the person-centered perspective, she might propose to post the names of top performers on the lunchroom bulletin board and hold monthly award ceremonies for these employees to instill pride in the good performers. From a performance-centered philosophy, she might propose switching from to a piece rate or pay-for-performance system to provide incentives to work harder. From a principled problem-solving perspective, she might propose an open-book

management strategy where employees are given full information about the implications of poor performance for the stakeholders and charter cross-functional teams to investigate the root causes of the problem and develop solutions. A HRD professional who can select from a number of different approaches will be likely to have a wider range of choices than one who is tied to only one perspective.

A second implication for practice is related to the newly evolving strategic role of HRD. Over the past 10 years, HRD has changed from a narrow function limited to designing and delivering training to a much broader organization-wide role (Gilley & Maycunich, 1998). Recognizing the competitive advantage of a committed and well-qualified workforce, HRD professional are becoming increasingly charged with developing organization-level HRD strategies. Strategic decisions, however, are choices over competing values and principles, and many organizations develop HRD philosophies to guide them. Being educated in the different HRD approaches will enlarge a firm's range of options in developing a firm-specific HRD 'signature', a set of guiding philosophies, values, strategies, and practices.

A third implication of this explication of different HRD philosophies is for educators and trainers of HRD professionals and other educators working in and with organizations. Organizations are now providing the majority of learning activities that working adults will experience; the preparation of HRD professionals, therefore is of critical importance. Training and education in HRD should include information and reflection of the paradigmatic and philosophical foundations of the field. While adult and vocational education university curricula often include at least one course addressing the history and philosophy of the respective, many HRD introductory courses and textbooks that I am aware of give only short shrift to such matters, instead focusing on functional topics such as instructional design and technology.

Finally, the issues raised in this paper impact research and scholarship. Researchers need to be aware of their own philosophies and value positions regarding the aims of developing persons working in organizations. They ought to state their value preference in the written research reports so as to allow the audience to situate the report and understand its merits and limitations. Secondly, empirical work and further theory development are necessary to learn more about the results of HRD activities conducted within each of the three approaches.

There is also a need to further address the philosophical and moral/ethical dimensions of HRD, areas not easily suited for empirical work. Here, questions include: What are the ethical/moral responsibilities of an organization towards its employees and vice versa? What are the boundaries of development that an organization can demand that an employee undergo? How to resolve value conflicts between an organization's HRD philosophy and the values/beliefs of its employees? How can the requirements of a competitive market economy and the call for democratic workplace practices be reconciled?

HRD is a field that is growing in importance and size. Because of its pragmatic orientation, much of the theorizing and research have held a functional flavor with largely unstated assumptions about values. As the field develops, a clearer and more open debate over its core values and philosophies is needed. I hope that this paper can begin a dialogue over one key aspect of the field: the aims and desired outcomes of development of persons in organizations through the field of HRD.

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